Reporting A Battle

An Experience of a Newspaper Correspondent

By MILLARD MALTBIE

"Kitson," said the editor in chief to me when the pan-European war broke out, "you must go to Europe at once to report the big fight that's on. Take the first steamer that sails, and don't fail, for it may be the last. The ships by which you must cross the ocean fly either the British or the German flag, and the cruisers of each will be trying to capture the other's vessels."

"Which army shall I accompany?"

"Any army. Go where there is the severest fighting."

My chief's surmise that the ship on which I sailed might be the last proved correct. At any rate, it was the last for awhile. I reached England when the Germans were attacking Liege and asked for permission to go over with the British troops that were being sent across the channel. I was refused. No newspaper correspondents were to be allowed with the army. I lost some time trying to convince the war office that the world was hungry for news of the fighting, but made no impression. I crossed the channel as soon as I could find a boat to take me and reached France at a time when the Germans were sweeping southward toward Paris.

How I got to the scene of the fighting I wouldn't like to say. I went by motorcar till the Germans took it away from me, then bought a horse cheap. The owner expected hourly some cavalryman would take it without paying for it, and when the animal was taken from me on the same terms I walked.

The great scene of my life was one morning when I reached an elevated point where I could look down on the battle raging between two lines, each so long that, though I was raised several hundred feet above them, I could not see either end of either army. Near by the thunder of heavy ordnance, the b-r-r-r-r-r of machine guns, the rattle of rifle firing, sounded like a storm, while on either side the sounds grew fainter and fainter in the distance, like rolling thunder dying away. Directly beneath me was a battery of large cannon screened from the enemy by a thicket. On a knoll slightly in advance of it stood an officer with a telephone receiver to his ear and a transmitter at his lips, giving the gunner the range. They were firing beyond the point they intended to hit, and he was doubtless giving them orders to reduce the distance, for I noticed that with every shot their shells exploded nearer to the French lines till at last they burst in a field where infantry were standing under arms and the shrapnel scattered among them caused frightful gaps in their ranks.

Above aeroplanes were moving hither and thither, some darting away to the east, some to the west and some coming from both east and west. Doubtless those moving on long distances were carrying news of the battle on the wings to the commander in chief in the center.

At that time the Germans were entering French territory and soon began their rapid movement toward Paris. Before nightfall the roar of battle had been moved so far southward that it now sounded like the mutterings of a storm that had passed. My work consisted of seeing the fighting, reporting it and sending my communications to my paper. So I remained behind to attend to the last two parts of my duties. About sunset, seeing beneath and in advance of me a hamlet, or, rather, the ruins of a hamlet, one house of which seemed to have been but little damaged, I descended from my perch, intending to use the remaining house for shelter and a place to write my dispatch.

I found the house in better shape than one would have supposed. True, several shells had made openings in the walls, but had not exploded within. Some of the furniture had been knocked into kindling wood, but there were a bed and bedding which had not been even disarranged. It occurred to me that after I had finished my scribbling, in case no opportunity occurred to reach a point where I could send it, I would use that bed for the night.

I found eatables, lights, almost any article I needed. So, having helped myself to the contents of the cupboard—cold meat and bread and butter—I lighted a kerosene lamp and wrote out a description of the fight I had seen.

When I had finished my work I went outside to reconnoiter, undecided whether it would be better to attempt to send off the report at once or wait till morning. I stood alone, surrounded by ruins. All was still except for an occasional distant boom and the creak of ambulances, farther on, taking up the wounded. A young moon cast a dim light over all. I walked down the street that separated the ruins and saw not a living thing. But here and there I passed a corpse of a soldier. Two, the one wearing the French uniform and the other the German, lay near together, the German having fallen upon the Frenchman so that they seemed to be sleeping in an embrace. A German boy—he looked no more than seventeen—was sitting with his back against a stone wall, where he had bled to death from a wound in his chest. He had doubtless been thinking of home.

Rather than remain among these grewsome scenes I preferred to take my dispatch to a station where I would be permitted to send it, but I knew not which way to go, and if I moved about in the dark I was liable to be shot. So I returned to the house where I had prepared it with the determination of sleeping on the bed I had seen till morning. Throwing myself on it dressed and without turning out the lamp—I did not relish darkness in such a place—I tried to sleep, but the exciting scenes I had witnessed during the day and the grewsome scenes about me kept me awake for awhile; then, fired with the exertion I had been put to, I fell asleep.

But not for long. I dreamed a shell had exploded above me, and I woke up in a tremble. And now I saw the first living thing that appeared to me in this wrecked abode. A door stood ajar, and in the opening was the face of a girl peering at me. On it was an expression of dread. The moment she saw that I was awake she drew away and closed the door.

Starting up, I ran to it and pulled it open. I could see nothing, but heard steps descending a pair of stairs.

In a twinkling I understood what it all meant. When the tide of battle had surged over this house the inmates had hidden in the cellar. I called out: "Je ne suis pas Allemand, mademoiselle. Je suis Americain." (I am not German. I am American.) Then, taking up the lamp, I descended the stairs. Huddled together was an old man, an old woman and several children. The girl I had seen stood between me and them.

Never have I seen a more pitiable sight. These people were living in a cellar, into which little light permeated. The old persons and the little children suffered most, the former being chilled by the damp atmosphere, the latter deprived of proper food. They had evidently entered their place of concealment in haste, for they had no bedding or other articles to make their imprisonment less distressing than it might otherwise have been.

I stood looking at them, pitying them; they looked at me, supposing that an enemy had discovered their retreat and expecting I know not what calamity. My first thought was to reassure them.

"The soldiers are gone," I said in French. "There is no danger. Come upstairs."

"Are you sure, monsieur?" asked the girl.

"Come and see for yourself."

I retraced my steps, and she followed me, but on reaching the floor above stood looking about her, as if dreading to see some fierce creature who would butcher her. As soon as she was satisfied that there was no such person about she called to the others, who came straggling up, looking furtively about them.

It was some time before I could quiet them so that they would communicate anything to me, but presently I gleaned from the girl that they had been in the cellar nearly two days, during which time they had had nothing to eat. They were all, especially the children, nearly famished. I helped them to get out what eatables there were at hand, and in a few moments they were eating ravenously, though before the girl began to eat she returned to the cellar and brought up a bottle of wine. For there are few persons in France but drink the wine of the country.

The family insisted on my occupying the only bed that had escaped being wrecked, but I resolutely declined, taking my blanket to an upper room, where I could see the stars through a hole in the roof made by a shell. There I stretched myself on the floor, feeling that if the dead were without the living were within. Consequently I went to sleep and slumbered till the sound of distant cannon awakened me, and I knew the slaughter had recommenced.

I decided to spend the day hunting an opportunity to send off my report, and after partaking of a breakfast of what was left in the larder I sallied forth. But I did not get very far. Guns, provisions, ammunition, were being hurried forward along the roads, and I concluded when evening came to find a place between thoroughfares to spend the night. So I repaired to the house I had occupied the night before.

I was disappointed to find the family gone. But when I reflected that they had nothing to eat I saw that their going was necessary. Not caring to spend another night amid such lonely surroundings, I determined to look for other quarters and found them in a barn that had escaped being leveled by shot or fire, though the uhlans had taken the contents for their horses. I succeeded in scraping together enough hay to make me a bed, on which I slept quite comfortably.

The next morning I had no difficulty in reaching a point where I could send my reports, for I was arrested by the French and hustled off to Calais. There again I met with grewsome sights, for the place was full of wounded.

Finding that reporting battles and fighting my way to the battleground without any assurance of being permitted to stay there was discouraging, I concluded to make a virtue of necessity and chose another field for my labors.

The war has changed much since then. There are more men, more guns, more shells, more aeroplanes. And that new kind of fortification, the trench, has become the principal defense in military engineering. More men are upon the air and more down under the sea. They fly higher and dive deeper. If so great have been the changes within a few years, what shall we have in another quarter of a century?

Gwendolin's Failing

How a New Year Resolution Was Kept

By F. A. MITCHEL

Miss Gwendolin Caruthers was a bankrupt in flirtation. During her summer outing she had become involved with three suitors; two more had been added in the autumn, and the Christmas holidays had increased the total by one more. Of those two were serious, three were semi-serious, and one was to be counted a credit instead of a debit, for the gentleman had not been brought to a proposal.

Now, considering the fact that Miss Caruthers had but one heart for the five or six suitors, her assets and liabilities may be said to be as one to half a dozen. Notwithstanding this distressing condition of her heart affairs, at a party congregated to see the old year out and the new year in she yielded to the temptation to take position in a window seat behind a curtain with still another young man and then and there deliberately drew him into a proposal.

Miss Caruthers' disposition to go heart hunting had been noticed by both her father and mother and had given them great concern.

"She's not only declining desirable parties," said her mother, "but driving away other desirable young men who do not dare trust her."

"Too bad!" said her father. "The day may come when she has passed the mating age and will be forced into enduring spinsterhood."

It was a great relief, therefore, when Gwendolin astonished her father and mother by coming down to breakfast with them at 9 o'clock New Year's morning and announcing to them that she had made a New Year's resolution not to incur any more heart liabilities during the year she was entering upon. In other words, she would not act toward any young man in an encouraging manner.

"Good for you, Gwen!" exclaimed her father, taking her in his arms. "If you assure me one year from today that you have kept your resolution I'll give you an automobile."

"Done!" cried Gwen, kissing him first on one cheek and then on the other.

"But"— said her father, holding her off and looking her in the eye.

"But what?"

"There must of course be an exception."

"I see; the exception is an acception."

"You mean an acceptance. If you accept a man and marry him that won't count."

"Suppose I accept him and don't marry him?"

"That will count."

Gwen gave her father another kiss and sat down to breakfast. She dismissed the matter of her newly made resolution from her mind, for she only realized its importance in relieving her from having to make excuses to rejected suitors and had no doubt whatever of keeping it.

Unfortunately there was just one weak spot in Gwen's resolution. In the list of men who had become entangled with her during the past year mention has been made of one whom she had been unable to bring to his knees. This was George Underwood, a young man much engrossed in business and so steady on his pins, to use a slangy phrase, that it was very difficult for any one to bowl him over. He was not a woman's man, never danced, and, as for an affair of hearts, it had not occurred to him that it could be played as a game.

Gwen had tackled him just as she had tackled the others, not having looked upon any of them as a probable husband. Underwood's attention was not easily secured, and when it was secured there was no favorable response to Gwen's advances. In vain she had endeavored to batter down that indifference which stood between her and his heart. When trying to secure an entrance she would be miffed at a commonplace remark about the weather or some other event equally far distant from what was uppermost in her mind. The consequence was that when she made her resolution on that New Year's morning she had but one regret—she would be obliged to leave Underwood unfinished.

Mr. Underwood was in control of a large business that brought him often in contact with Mr. Caruthers. Occasionally he had come into the latter's home of an evening to talk over some business enterprise, and Gwen had lain in wait for him as he was about to depart. He was past thirty and was beginning to consider himself too old for girls still in their teens. Consequently when Gwen wished to hold him for the rest of the evening she was obliged to resort to subterfuge. She would ask for his opinion on some matter upon which she was in doubt or beg him to help her out for the rest of the evening at a game of cribbage. Once she asked him to play at "hearts" with her in a tone that would have made any other man suspicious of her at once; but, whether Underwood understood her or not, he gave no responsive sign.

Gwen never saw Underwood, who eschewed social functions, except on these visits to her father. The first time the former called after the resolution she locked herself in her room. One would have supposed that instead of his having cause to be afraid of her it was she who was afraid of him. At his second call, during which an important business matter kept him with her father till 10 o'clock, on hearing him in the hall about to take his departure she went do[illegible] on purpose to see if he showed any disappointment at not having seen her at the time of his last call. The business matter he had been discussing engrossed his attention, and he went out with simply a "Good evening."

"Papa," said Gwen to her father the next morning at breakfast, "I am thinking of making one exception in my New Year resolution. In case I do how about the car?"

"The only exception, so far as the car is concerned, is marriage."

Gwen pouted. It was evident that marriage was not to be considered in the case to which she referred.

Mr. Underwood did not have occasion to call on Mr. Caruthers again for six months. Then he came intending to remain only long enough to secure the latter's signature to a document.

While the two men were talking in Mr. Caruthers' smoking den Gwen was waiting in the drawing room for them to end their conference, for she desired to speak with Underwood before he left the house. In this instance the meeting was unusually prolonged, and every now and again Gwen noticed that the words were spoken in a low voice, for the door of the smoking room was but partly closed, and when they were uttered in an ordinary tone she could hear something of what was said. What she was waiting for was to ask Mr. Underwood what kind of car she should select, for New Year's day was approaching, and she was anticipating her promised reward.

Now, there was great risk in Gwen's consulting the only man who was likely to make her break her resolution upon the character of the prize she was to win by keeping it. Underwood seemed to be oblivious to her having any other intention than what appeared on the surface. It is not to be asserted that Gwen did have any other intention. It is quite likely that if she had she would not admit it to herself.

This was in November, and but six or seven weeks remained for Gwen to keep her resolution and win the car. Therefore it is not surprising that she should be thinking about what kind of car she would ask her father to buy for her. Underwood gave her the points pro and con of different cars and recommended a make that he used himself as one very easily handled. Would she like to try his car? She thought she would, but feared for her resolution. However, the time was so nearly up that she concluded to venture.

The afternoon appointed for the drive Indian summer weather prevailed, and there was a genial languor in the air. Gwen had been "good" for ten months. With so indifferent a person she did not think it dangerous to put out a feeler. For the first time she received a response. She tried hard to stop, but the ruling passion was too strong for her. She went further and was met halfway. Presently Mr. Underwood, not waiting for a new advance, plunged into violent lovemaking, followed by a declaration.

New Year's morning came round, and Mr. Caruthers said to his daughter, "Well, Gwen, can you assure me that you have done nothing during the past year to draw any man into a proposal?"

Gwen looked first at the ceiling, then at the floor, then out of the window, but made no reply.

"You don't mean, sweetheart," continued the parent, "that you have lost your car?"

"I don't know."

"If you have I'm very sorry. I have put aside $5,000 for the purpose."

"Five thousand!"

"Yes."

Gwen was silent for awhile, then said, "I'm afraid, papa, that in order to win I'll have to get married."

"Don't do that unless you can give the man you marry your heart."

"I'm not quite certain about that."

"Whom have you drawn into your net?"

"George Underwood—only I fancy he drew me into his net."

"George is a splendid fellow."

"And the car he uses is a splendid car."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, you see, papa, when the end of my probation was coming and I was thinking what kind of car I should have I asked Mr. Underwood the kind he would recommend. He recommended one he used himself and offered to take me out in it. I just thought I would try him a little teeny weeny bit. Giving him an inch, he took an ell."

The father burst into a laugh and, taking his daughter in his arms, hugged her.

"Well, sweetheart," he said, "what are you going to do?"

"I can't possibly give up the auto."

"How about marrying George?"

"Oh, I suppose I'll have to swallow him."

"Good! When you make up your mind tell him so, and I'll order the car."

"I've told him already."

There was another kiss, and the parent went away to telephone his congratulations to Underwood. Desiring the young man for a son-in-law and having been asked by him for permission to pay his addresses to Gwen, Underwood had been apprised of the situation and enabled to take advantage of it.

And now an excellent husband and a numerous progeny have removed all temptation from Mrs. Underwood to flirt, and she is narrowly watching her oldest daughter, fearing that she may inherit her mother's delinquency.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack White who were married here Dec. 31st left Tuesday afternoon for Broken Bow where they may decide to locate. The former has been employed as baker in Sidney for some time and the latter was Miss Mabel Carroll who was employed in Sidney the past year.

PROBATE NOTICE
In the Matter of the Estate of Margatha Burke, Deceased.

In the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska, Nov. 26, 1915.

Notice is hereby given that the creditors of said deceased will meet the Executors of said Estate before the County Judge of Lincoln County, Nebraska, at the County Court Room, in said County, on the 28th day of January, 1916 and on the 28th day of July, 1916, at 9 o'clock A. M. each day, for the purpose of presenting their claims for examination, adjustment and allowance. Six months are allowed for creditors to present their claims, and one year for the Executors to settle said Estate from the 28th day of Jan., 1916. This notice will be published in the North Platte Tribune, a legal newspaper printed in said County, for four weeks successively prior to January 28th, 1916.

GEO. E. FRENCH,
County Judge.
d28-4w

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION
Serial No. 01145
Department of the Interior

U. S. Land Office at North Platte, Nebraska, Dec. 20, 1915.

Notice is hereby given that William A. Gaunt, of North Platte, Nebr., who on Jan. 4, 1909, made Homestead entry, No. 01145 for SE¼, S½ NE¼, SE¼ NW¼, E½ SW¼, Lots 1-2-3, Section 2, Township 15, N., Range 31, W., 6th Principal Meridian has filed notice of intention to make final five year Proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before the Register and Receiver, at North Platte, Nebr., on the 14th day of Feb., 1916.

Claimant names as witnesses: Henry Doebke, James Bechan, George Macomber, Harry Madison, all of North Platte, Nebr.

J. E. EVANS,
Register.
d2-6w

NOTICE OF HEARING

In the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska.

In the Matter of the Estate of Gerritt J. Hampe, Deceased.

To the Creditors, Heirs and All Persons Interested in Said Estate:

Notice is hereby given that Charles Hampe filed his petition in this Court on the 15th day of December 1915, in which he alleges that the said Gerritt J. Hampe, deceased, departed this life intestate on October 10, 1911, at Muscatine, in Muscatine County, Iowa, being at the time of his death a resident of said City, County and State, and seized in fee of an undivided one-half interest in all of the lands hereinafter described, situated in the State of Nebraska, the title thereto being held by him by his initials thus, "G. J. Hampe," to-wit:

Northeast Quarter of Southeast Quarter (NE¼ of SE¼), West Half of Southeast Quarter (W½ of SE ¼), Northeast Quarter of Southwest Quarter (NE¼ of SW¼) of Section Thirty-Four (34), Township Thirteen (13) North, Range Twenty-Nine (29) West, 6th P. M., in Lincoln County, Nebraska.

Southwest Quarter (SW¼) of Section Nineteen (19), Township Nine (9) North, Range Thirty, (30) West, 6th P. M., in Lincoln County, Nebraska.

Southeast Quarter (SE¼) of Section Seven (7), Township Nineteen (19) North, Range Fifty-Eight (58) West, 6th P. M., in Banner County, Nebraska.

Northeast Quarter of Northwest Quarter (NE¼ of NW¼), of Section Fifteen (15), Township Twenty-Nine (29) North, Range Eight (8) West, 6th P. M., in Knox County Nebraska.

And that the petitioner, Charles Hampe, and his sister, Christina Te Strake, each inherited an undivided one-fourth interest in the above described lands. The prayer of said petition is that the Court determine the time of the death of the said Gerritt J. Hampe, deceased, his heirs, the degree of kinship and the right of descent of the real property above described, and that all claims and demands against said estate be forever barred.

The said petition will be heard before the County Court in the Court House in the City of North Platte, County of Lincoln, State of Nebraska, on January 21, 1916, at 9 o'clock A. M., at which time all persons interested in said estate may appear and show cause, if any there be, why the prayer of said petition should not be granted.

Dated December 15, 1915.

GEO. E. FRENCH,
County Judge.
d28-3w